AIDS TOOLKITS

HIV/AIDS AND COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

How to use this Toolkit . . .

This Toolkit presents a methodology for:

- Understanding and assessing how HIV/AIDS impacts on government agencies with community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) mandates, such as Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, Water, and Irrigation; and

- Identifying opportunities for these agencies to contribute to a larger, multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS by integrating HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation strategies into sectoral policies, strategies, and programs.

This Toolkit is designed for agencies that support CBNRM initiatives, defined as any community-led effort to foster productive and sustainable use of surrounding soil, water, forest, rangeland, wildlife, and fisheries resources. The target audience includes policy makers, administrators, planners, project managers, and human resources staff.

This Toolkit refers to, and is to be used with, four accompanying documents:

1) *Understanding HIV/AIDS;*
2) *Why HIV/AIDS Is a Government Issue;*
3) *HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees; and*
4) *Planning Tools.*

It can also be used in conjunction with the *HIV/AIDS and Agriculture* Toolkit.

Overall, the Toolkit is designed to assist your Ministry or agency in taking action on HIV/AIDS. It is based on several principles:

- Provide active commitment by leadership: A clear message of support from those at the highest levels in your Ministry is essential to planning and imple-

menting an effective response to HIV/AIDS. Ideally, this should be backed by incentives for staff to participate.

- Take immediate action: Start simply, focusing on strategies that can be integrated into existing programs, are cost-effective, make use of available resources, and address the most important problems. Do not delay doing something while you wait for additional information or resources.

- Provide resources: An HIV/AIDS task force within your agency should have adequate manpower and budget, representatives from a cross-section of departments and staff expertise, and access to HIV/AIDS mitigation experts. The task force can

This document is one in a series of pamphlets targeted for Government Ministries.
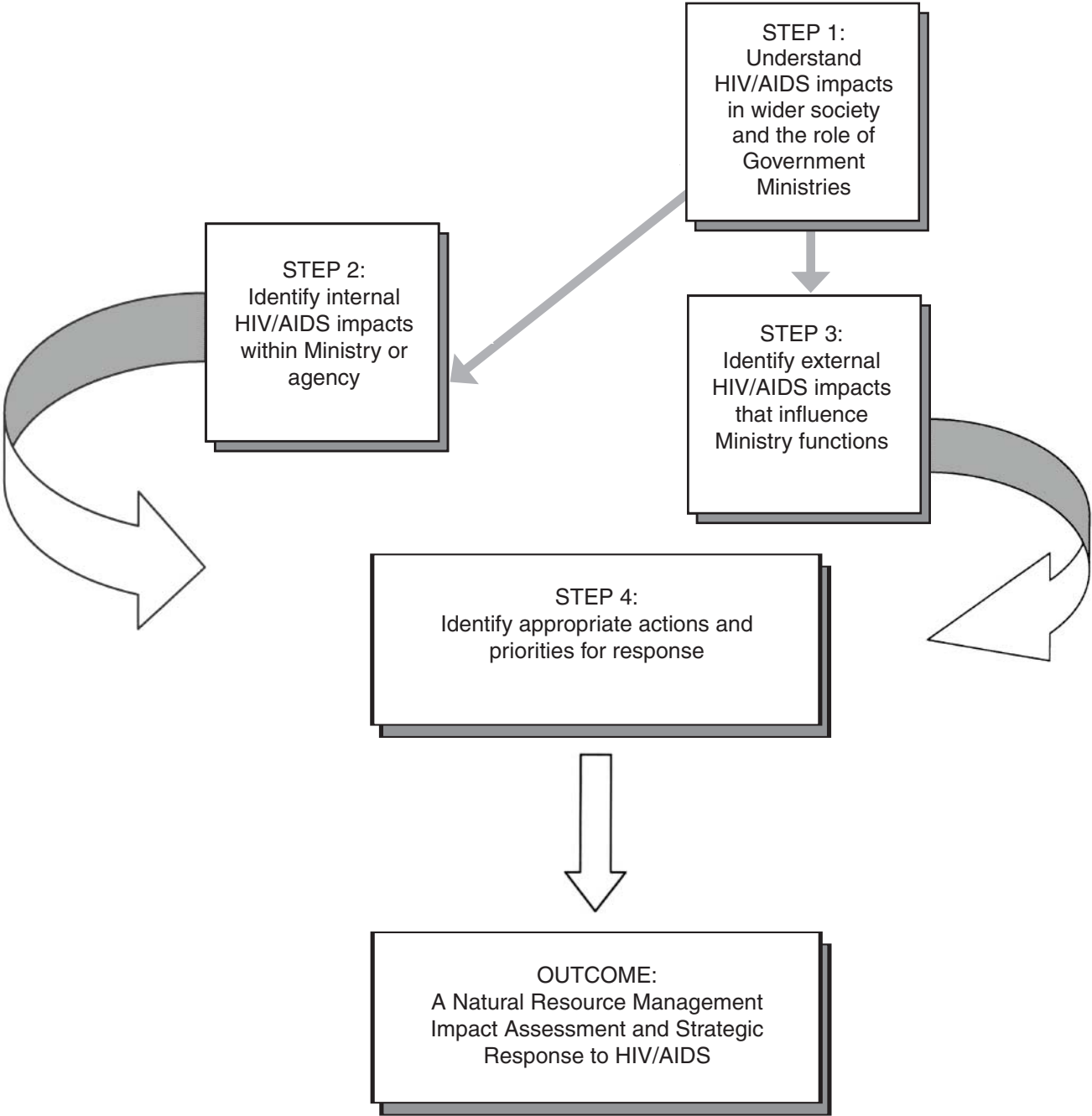
The aims are:

- To assist priority sectors in identifying areas where they are vulnerable to the impacts of HIV/AIDS; and
- To suggest specific steps that can be taken.

oversee an agency-wide response that encompasses all natural resource management programs, including but not limited to CBNRM. In addition, it should establish mechanisms to coordinate with multisectoral AIDS committees at the national, district, and community levels.

The four-step process presented here offers a series of questions to facilitate discussion. It also points you to resources that may be helpful in preparing and implementing an HIV/AIDS Response Strategy for your Ministry.

FIGURE 1:
Four Steps to Developing a
Natural Resource Management Response to HIV/AIDS

STEP 1:
Understand HIV/AIDS impacts in wider society and the role of Government Ministries

STEP 2:
Identify internal HIV/AIDS impacts within Ministry or agency

STEP 3:
Identify external HIV/AIDS impacts that influence Ministry functions

STEP 4:
Identify appropriate actions and priorities for response

OUTCOME:
A Natural Resource Management Impact Assessment and Strategic Response to HIV/AIDS

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Step 1:
Understanding HIV/AIDS impacts in wider society, and the role of Government Ministries

HIV/AIDS impacts societies, economies, and governments at many levels, a few of which are described here.

Impact on households and communities

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is threatening many parts of the world and having a catastrophic effect on parts of Africa. As of the end of 2001, more than 40 million people worldwide are affected by HIV/AIDS. More than 28 million are infected in Africa alone, where 15 countries have adult infection rates that surpass 10 percent. This translates into a far higher number of survivors, parents, and children left to cope with the consequences. HIV/AIDS lowers life expectancies, reduces family incomes, increases health care expenses, transforms or wipes out traditional family structures (i.e., creates orphans), and disrupts community life.

Poverty

The HIV/AIDS epidemic creates a vicious cycle as it exacerbates poverty among already poor, displaced, and/or marginalized populations, making them more susceptible to HIV infection. The impact is particularly severe on women and adolescent girls because they may be forced to sell sex for money or for access to resources. Poor adolescent girls are among the most vulnerable groups.

An example of the impact on CBNRM sectors

According to a 2000 nation-wide survey in Malawi, forestry and fisheries enterprises indicated that HIV/AIDS affected them through the loss of customers, requiring them to downsize their businesses.

Source: Micro and Small Enterprise Survey, 2000 (http://www.nso.malawi.net)

Macroeconomic impacts

When HIV infection rates exceed 5 percent in a country, HIV/AIDS begins to have significant economy-wide impacts. Reductions in labor, savings, and investment constrain economic activities, slowing economic growth and worsening the trade balance (balance of payments). As the proportion of the budget allocated to health care rises, scarce funds are diverted from other critical public services.

Government

HIV/AIDS also undermines governments' capacities to provide important public services. High rates of illness and death among civil servants rob countries of critical leadership, expertise, and experience. At the same time, they disrupt established working relationships and generally destabilize normal government functions. This loss of human resources represents a new form of "brain drain" and presents a serious threat to governments' ability to promote economic growth, alleviate poverty, and improve the quality of life for its citizens.

Environment and natural resources

The HIV/AIDS epidemic weakens natural resource management in several ways. Within an AIDS-affected community, high death rates threaten traditional resource management and land tenure systems, as well as local governance structures. In addition, shorter life expectancies and the immediate costs associated with health care and funeral expenses cause people to focus on short-term coping mechanisms rather than long-term plans. This may increase exploitation of natural resources. In turn, degradation of natural resources creates "environmental refugees" or migrants. This contributes to the HIV/AIDS crisis because migrants are more likely to have multiple sex partners and may bring HIV back to their families and communities.

Government agencies can play a critical role in addressing the underlying social and economic factors that increase people's vulnerability. This is particularly true of agencies with CBNRM mandates, where extension agents interact directly with families and communities and promote poverty alleviation. These agencies can develop a strategy to slow the rate of new HIV infections and mitigate the impact of existing HIV infections, both among staff and among rural populations.

Government Ministries have at least four strategic roles as part of a multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS:

- Creating an "enabling environment" at the national level to support community and district responses to HIV/AIDS;
- Monitoring and evaluating HIV/AIDS responses in the sector;
- Identifying and disseminating successful HIV/AIDS responses in the sector; and
- Helping "scale up" successful community-based responses to HIV/AIDS.

Step 2:
Identify impacts within your Ministry, Department, or Agency

What types of risks does your agency face because of HIV/AIDS? And what might be the extent and consequences of HIV infections among employees from the national level down to the local level? This checklist provides a guide to answer these questions:

- What are the rates of HIV infection among agency staff?
- Are some staff more susceptible to HIV infection than others? For example, which staff are required

to travel or sleep away from home when conducting their duties?
- How is the disease affecting employee absenteeism, productivity, and morale? Are there differences in impacts between male and female employees?
- Are HIV-related illnesses and death affecting the availability of skilled labor (turnover, recruitment, and training)?
- Do the impacts of the disease necessitate a change in employee benefits and associated budget?
- Does your agency have an HIV/AIDS support group for employees with HIV/AIDS?
- Does your agency have an HIV/AIDS workplace policy that addresses both prevention and mitigation? If yes, is the leadership committed to its implementation? How effective are current measures, if any, to prevent employee HIV/AIDS and manage impacts?

Step 3:
Identify external impacts that influence Ministry functions

HIV/AIDS in the larger environment may also affect your Ministry's ability to carry out its functions and achieve its goals.

First, what are the core Ministry functions related to CBNRM? These may include:

- Local resource assessments and land-use planning;
- Protected areas management;
- Sustainable harvest and management regimes (i.e., agriculture, forests, fisheries, livestock, wildlife);
- Sustainable rural enterprises (including both natural resource-based enterprises and alternative income generating opportunities to alleviate pressures on natural resources);
- Extension and training services;
- Natural resource policies and laws (allocation of natural resources, tenure instruments, fees and royalties, penalties, etc.);
- Law enforcement;
- Promotion of ecotourism; and
- Promotion of private sector participation in CBNRM activities.

Will achievement of these functions change because of HIV/AIDS? The following list presents questions to help you assess conditions in your target populations that can affect your agency's core functions. Consult with your field office personnel at the provincial and local levels (as well as the Ministry of Health and the national AIDS coordinating body) to answer the following questions:

- What is the prevalence of HIV in rural communities?
- What is the prevalence of HIV by age, gender, and household income?
- Are some regions or ecosystems more severely affected by HIV/AIDS than others?

- What are the main HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation activities already in place?
- Are the roles of women or children in rural families changing?
- What are the traditional land tenure patterns?
- How are intergenerational property transfers (land, livestock, assets) conducted?
- What are women's and children's rights to inheritance?
- How are property transfer mechanisms affecting poverty, especially among women and children?
- What are the seasonal labor migration patterns for men and women? Are these shifting?
- Which CBNRM stakeholders are highly mobile and possibly more at risk of HIV infection?
- What are the predominant rural livelihood strategies?
- Are there new resource requirements?
- Are alternative livelihood opportunities available that have fewer resource requirements or are otherwise more sustainable?
- How are local government structures changing as a consequence of the HIV/AIDS epidemic?
- How are CBNRM practices changing as a consequence of HIV/AIDS?
- How are demands for existing CBNRM services changing? What type of new CBNRM services may be in need?
- Does ecotourism increase HIV risks? Is fear of HIV/AIDS reducing ecotourism revenues?

Responses to these questions can help your agency understand and articulate the changing development needs of the communities you serve.

Refer to Chart 2 in the *Planning Tools* Toolkit for more detailed information on how to conduct a baseline assessment of external impacts and monitor changes over time.

Step 4:
Identify appropriate responses

Based on the information collected in Steps 1, 2, and 3 above, this step involves identifying actions your agency can take to minimize HIV/AIDS impacts on your agency and to contribute to a larger, multisectoral HIV/AIDS response.

Examples of actions to minimize the internal impact of HIV/AIDS

- **Help create an enabling environment:** an enabling and supportive workplace environment in which employees can share ideas about HIV/AIDS is essential in developing your agency's response.

- **Prevent new infections:** implement an HIV prevention program in the workplace by distributing educational materials and condoms and referring employees to external resources (such as clinics that treat sexually transmitted infections and voluntary HIV counseling and testing).
- **Reduce workplace vulnerabilities:** consider agency policies (e.g., more family time for field staff working away from home) that are likely to reduce vulnerabilities to HIV infection.
- **Absenteeism and productivity:** consider reorganizing tasks and schedules, create back-up systems by cross-training workers to cover for each other, and monitor performance.

AN EXAMPLE:
GHANA MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE'S HIV/AIDS RESPONSE STRATEGY

Ghana's Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) realizes that HIV/AIDS will increasingly impact its workforce, farmers, and agricultural production and ultimately jeopardize the sector's contribution to Ghana's Vision 2020. In March 2001, the Minister instructed the Directorate of Agriculture Extension Services (DAES) to appoint and train HIV/AIDS desk officers in all regions to help raise communities' awareness of HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS initiative is located in the Gender, Youth, and Health Unit of DAES.

Recently, MOFA prepared a detailed action plan as a component of the Ghana AIDS Commission's (GAC) multisectoral plan. In the first phase of the program, MOFA plans to strengthen its institutional capacity to collaborate with other sectors, donors, community-based organizations, the District Assembly, GAC, and UNAIDS. Simultaneously, it will identify response strategies based on its comparative advantages and implement these as pilot activities in districts with a high prevalence of HIV infection. In the second phase, MOFA will lead efforts to "scale up" successful practices in collaboration with District Response Initiatives.

MOFA's program to address HIV/AIDS impacts on the Ministry is organized around the following themes: sensitization, prevention and control, care and support, and human rights and gender issues. MOFA's external program covers behavioral change to prevent HIV/AIDS infection and reduce vulnerability to the epidemic; rural community empowerment activities; food security initiative for vulnerable rural groups; and development of a bi-directional impact monitoring and evaluation system.

MOFA has been successful in involving donors and development partners, especially GTZ, DFID, and FAO, to support its activities.

Source: MOFA Sectoral Work Plan for HIV/AIDS, submitted to the Ghana AIDS Commission (April 2001).

- **Recruitment and training:** streamline recruitment and appointment processes, integrate HIV/AIDS prevention and management into training materials, and emphasize training that offers quick returns (i.e., in-service training, study tours, short courses).
- **Morale:** develop support systems for employees affected by HIV/AIDS and/or refer employees to external sources of support to prevent discrimination.
- **Benefits:** revise employee benefits to ensure that benefit programs are financially sustainable, equitable, and responsive to employee needs; implement and provide information on official medical and functional criteria for HIV/AIDS disability status (refer to the Ministry of Health or other appropriate agencies).
- **Gender:** ensure that HIV/AIDS educational materials and activities emphasize women's rights to negotiate safer sex, ensure that sexual harassment is not tolerated in the workplace, and refer women to external resources for health education and services.
- **Capacity to respond:** establish an HIV/AIDS unit and/or task force including management and field workers to oversee the design and implementation of an HIV/AIDS Response Strategy; identify mechanisms to collaborate with task forces in other ministries; establish a monitoring system to track the internal impact of AIDS; and conduct education, prevention, and mitigation activities for all agency staff.

> Refer to the *HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees* Toolkit for more detailed information.

Examples of actions to minimize external impacts and support a multisectoral response

- Identify your agency's plans and activities that may already be able to contribute to an HIV/AIDS response strategy.
- Identify your agency's resources—workforce, institutions, partners, and services—already in place for HIV/AIDS responses.
- Identify mechanisms for collaboration with other HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives in your country.
- Establish links to similar agencies in your region to share information on effective CBNRM responses to HIV/AIDS.
- Identify CBNRM services (related to institution and capacity building, community mobilization, and vulnerability reduction) that can promote long-term economic coping strategies for those affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Incorporate HIV/AIDS prevention education, counseling, and services in CBNRM organizations.
- Develop a simple monitoring and evaluation plan to track HIV/AIDS impacts on CBNRM and to track the progress of responses.
- Include HIV in environmental impact assessments and in the planning stages of all projects and programs.

Appendix 1:
References and useful contacts

Studies/Articles/Reports

- Barany, M., Hammett, A., Sene, A., and Amichev, B. *Nontimber Forest Benefits and HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa. Journal of Forestry*, vol. 99, no. 12:36-41, December 2001.
- Barnett, T. and Whiteside, A. *Guidelines for Studies of the Social and Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS.* UNAIDS, 2000.
- Food and Agriculture Organization, Sustainable Development Department. *Linkages Between the Rural Population Ageing, Intergenerational Transfers of Land and Agricultural Production: Are They Important?* September 1999.
- Haddad, L. and Gillespie, S. *Effective Food and Nutrition Policy Responses to HIV/AIDS: What We Know and What We Need to Know.* IFPRI, FCND Discussion Paper, no. 112, June 2001.
- Loewenson, R. and Whiteside, A. *HIV/AIDS— Implications for Poverty Reduction*, UNDP, UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS, June 2001.
- UNAIDS/Economic Commission for Africa. *AIDS in Africa: Country by Country*, September 2000.
- UNAIDS. *Measuring the Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Agricultural Sector in Africa.* Background Paper, December 2000.
- World Bank. *Rural Workers' Contribution to the Fight Against HIV/AIDS: A Framework for District and Community Action.* Regional Program on Rural AIDS, Internal Note, August 2000.

Websites for Organizations, Networks, and Conferences

- UNAIDS Website for information, news, and reports at: http://www.unaids.org
- The Community-Based Natural Resource Management Portal Website for documents, reports, and information on all aspects of CBNRM at: http://www.cbnrm.net/
- The Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group Workforce on the Implications of HIV/AIDS on Africa's Natural Resources and Conservation at: http://www.frameweb.org/Partner_pages_ABCG.html and http://www.abcg.org
- FRAME—current information for environment and natural resource management professionals in Africa at: http://www.frameweb.org
- The "Listen to Africa" forum was held in Chicago in September 2001. This collaborative forum presenting African perspectives on integrating health, economics, and the environment is developing contacts linking HIV/AIDS and natural resource management. Source: http://www.listentoafrica.org

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